



Organizational leadership and the engaged university: Redefining gendered models of leadership?

Brandon Kliewer, Assistant Professor, Florida Gulf Coast University
[brandon.kliewer@gmail.com]

Keywords: Organizational leadership, gender, mixed-method quantitative study, Neoinstitutionalism, institutionalization

Conference track: Organizational change and sustainability

Format: Research/Scholarly paper

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine relationships between the institutionalization of community engagement and the development of conceptions of leadership across dimensions of gender. It is guided by the following question: Is there a relationship between the organizational change associated with institutionalizing community engagement and redefining conceptions of gendered leadership that deserves additional research? Very little is known about the relationship between gender and community engagement.

I explored the relationship between the organizational structure of an engaged university and the emerging ability of individuals to challenge gendered conceptions of leadership. Using Neoinstitutionalism (NI) theory, I examined how the development of micro-level or individual leadership strategies, in the context of community engagement, has the potential to challenge gendered conceptions of organizational leadership and overcome the leadership dilemma (Phillips & Malhotra,

2008; Powell & Colyvas, 2008; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991).

My research employed a mixed-method approach where I used a probit statistical regression to analyze survey data from documents associated with the 2008-2011 Engagement Academy for University Leaders seminar organized by Virginia Tech.

Preliminary findings show that: the gender divide between leaders of community engagement is essentially 50/50; there may be areas of the university where men are over represented as leaders of engagement; and there may be a relationship between gender and institutional type. There are strong trends in the data to suggest that leaders of engagement that identify as women might be over represented in master's universities and under represented in Research I universities.

The results of this research extend the literature into an area of knowledge that is currently underdeveloped in the field and this research topic defines a new agenda for other scholars to follow.

References

Butin, D. (2010). *Service-learning in theory and practice: The future of community engagement in higher education*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Holland, B. (2009). Will it last? Evidence of institutionalization at Carnegie Classified Community Engagement institutions. *New Directions in Higher Education*, 147, 85-98.

Saltmarsh, J., & Hartley, M. (Eds.). (2011). *"To serve a larger purpose": Engagement for democracy and the transformation of higher education*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Sandmann, L., Thornton, C., & Jaeger, A. (2009). *Institutionalizing community engagement in higher education: The first wave of Carnegie Classified institutions*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Stivers, C. (2002). *Gender images in public administration: Legitimacy and the administrative state* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Philips, N., & Malhotra, N. (2008). Taking social construction seriously: Extending the discursive approach in institutional theory. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, K. Sahlin, & R. Suddaby (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook on organizational institutionalism* (pp. 702–720). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Powell, W., & Colyvas, J. (2008). Microfoundations of institutional theory. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, K. Sahlin, & R. Suddaby (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook on organizational institutionalism* (pp. 276–323). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Powell, W., & DiMaggio, P. (1991). *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.